



Volume 1 - Number 5 * August 1998

General Articles

[The Network
Connection](#)

[List of the Month](#)

[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

Other Resources

[Back Issues](#)

[UNT Main Page](#)

[UNT Calendar](#)

[Support Services](#)

[General Access
Lab Hours](#)

[Tutorials &
References](#)

[Training Web](#)

[Academic
Computing
Services](#)

[Computing Center](#)

[About
Benchmarks
Online](#)

Feature Articles

[Campus Computing News](#)

Dr. Maurice Leatherbury, Senior Director of Academic Computing Services, continues to provide updates on campus computing. This month's news concerns new hours for the Computing Center HelpDesk is adopting the fall semester, Windows 98, and virus protection software.

[Time to Renew PRAS Subscriptions](#)

It's that time of year again -- time to renew your Premium Remote Access subscription. All the details are contained in this article, including the announcement of new and improved service.

[New Telecom Service Request Procedures](#)

When the Telecommunications Department was moved into the Computing Center on June 1, the billing function was moved to Claims Accounting. A review of departmental procedures as a result of this move has led to the establishment of some new procedures.

[GroupWise E-Mail Issues](#)

This article addresses some issues that have come up lately with regard to GroupWise usage. One issue is the use of GroupWise's "UNT Everyone" List, and the other is loss of messages due to automatic deletion.

[Windows 98: Personally I Like it!](#)

Since Microcomputer Maintenance will begin shipping Windows 98 on their new machines, it seemed like a good time to print a review of the product. This article should help you determine if Windows 98 is for you.

[Statistical Computing Tips: S-Plus](#)

The Research and Statistical Support Group in Academic Computing Services will be supporting the S-Plus statistical package this fall. This article serves as a brief introduction to the product.

[Page One](#)

[Campus
Computing News](#)

[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)

[New Telecom
Service Request
Procedures](#)

[GroupWise E-Mail
Issues](#)

[Windows 98:
Personally I Like
it!](#)

[Statistical
Computing Tips:
S-Plus](#)

[The Network
Connection](#)

[List of the Month](#)

[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

Network Connection

By [Kevin Mullet](#), guest columnist and NMS Datacommunications Computer Systems Manager

Pretty Good Privacy¹

I recently got into a conversation about public key cryptography and the importance of PGP. You know the scheme: "What it is /what it does /what it does for us." Actually, my co-worker was pretty much cornered into the conversation when he had the, uh, good fortune to ask another PGP enthusiast and I for a system password and we said "sure... just send us your public key and we'll E-Mail it to you." Of course, requests for essential information about what PGP is ensued, thus this article.

First off, here's a URL for the software: <http://bs.mit.edu:8001/pgp-form.html> A caveat: That HTML form points to the freeware version of the software. For now, make your own evaluation of whether or not you can legitimately use the freeware version for more than just an evaluation based on the license agreement. Once I find out more definitive information from the Computer Associates legal department, I'll follow-up to both the netman list (a public group aimed at Network Managers here at UNT) as well as *Benchmarks Online* (CA bought PGP, Inc., and is now the US supplier of the commercial version of PGP.).

While I'm at it, here's a couple of additional URLs to give more information than just the vague overview in this article.

- MIT's Pretty Good Privacy homepage: <http://web.mit.edu/network/pgp.html>
- The comp.security.pgp FAQ has lots of good information, you might want to skim it and bookmark it for later reading. <http://www.pgp.net/pgpnet/pgp-faq/>

So what is PGP?

I'll start off with the answer to question 1.1 of the comp.security.pgp FAQ, "What is PGP?". Then I'll tell you why I believe the answer is misleading, or at least incomplete. According to the definition presented in that FAQ:

PGP is a program that gives your electronic mail something that it otherwise doesn't have: Privacy. It does this by encrypting your mail so that nobody but the intended person can read it. When encrypted, the message looks like a meaningless jumble of random characters. PGP has proven itself quite capable of resisting even the most sophisticated forms of analysis aimed at reading the encrypted text.

PGP can also be used to apply a digital signature to a message without encrypting it. This is normally used in public postings where you don't want to hide what you are saying, but rather want to allow others to confirm that the message actually came from you. Once a digital signature is created, it is impossible for anyone to modify either the message or the signature without the modification being detected by PGP.

While PGP is easy to use, it does give you enough rope so that you can hang yourself. You should become thoroughly familiar with the various options in PGP before using it to send serious messages. For example, giving the command `pgp -sat <filename>` will only sign a message, it will not encrypt it. Even though the output looks like it is encrypted, it really isn't. Anybody in the world would be able to recover the original text.

Okay, here's my two bits.

More Than Just E-Mail

PGP is much more than a utility that lets you encrypt your E-Mail, although I predict that once you start using PGP, E-Mail encryption will constitute at least 90% of your use. PGP can also be used for secure archival storage of any type of file, so you can take all your security exploit documents, encrypt them with long public key encryption and not lose any sleep over their safety.

The Core of the Matter

Here's the most concise way I can put it. PGP lets you perform encryption and electronic signature on files containing text or any other data. PGP does this by employing a mechanism called public key encryption. As opposed to single-key encryption where the same key is used to both encrypt (lock) and decrypt (unlock) files, public key encryption uses a "public key" to encrypt, and a "private key" to decrypt.

These "keys" are typically conveyed as blocks of hexadecimal text that are generated and managed from within the encryption software. Typically, you would freely give your public key to anyone who might ever want to exchange signed or encrypted information with you. Conversely, you would typically keep your private key in a very safe place, since it's a vital component of your public key encryption credentials. The combination of your private key and your "key phrase" (a phrase or sentence used like a password) permits anyone to decrypt any information intended for you, or to sign documents and claim to be you. Obviously, then, you shouldn't disclose your key phrase to anyone.

A Word About Key Management

Use PGP for any length of time, and with any variety of users, and you'll start to accumulate a bunch of public keys, usually one or two per person. All versions of PGP software provide for maintaining your "key ring". Each time you add a public key to your ring (so you can use it to encrypt documents), you must satisfy yourself that the key actually belongs to the person indicated on the key. Some people meet this requirement by using keys physically handed to them on discreet media like a floppy disk. Usually, you'll get someone's key from their Web page, through unsecure E-Mail or through a Web-based key server. Once you retrieve a key, you can add it to your ring, then contact the person to whom the key is supposed to belong, and compare "fingerprints" (actually long hexadecimal strings unique to each key) between what they believe is their key and what you believe is their key. If you're satisfied that the key truly belongs to them, then you can set the "trust" on your key accordingly. Later on, this "trust" will enable you to authenticate by proxy additional keys you might acquire. If you get a key off someone's home page or from unsecure E-Mail, and you find that it's been digitally signed by someone whose identity you HAVE confirmed, you may decide to "trust" the identity of the new key based on that signature. This arrangement is called the PGP "Web of trust."

An more highly-organized alternative is used with X.509 certificates, which are an integral part of the Secure Sockets Layer (used in https:// method URLs). In the ITU-T X.509 model, trust originates with and is assigned by formally defined certificate authorities, such as Verisign, who delegate and control trust in a downward hierarchy must more structured than the PGP Web of trust.

So the current bottom line appears to be this. PGP is the most commonly used, potentially highly secure encryption suite around. So much so that its strength and availability was one of the primary motivations for Clipper and various other anti-encryption legislative attempts by the US federal government. Using PGP isn't as cut-and-dry as one might hope, but the recent Win95-based versions have made things so easy that virtually anyone with a bit of persistence can be encrypting like nobody's business.ⁿ

[1] We have published items about PGP and privacy in *Benchmarks* before, including ["Shhh! Honey, did you hear something?"](#) and ["Personal Privacy Pointers."](#) Privacy in electronic communications was also the focus of one of the Network Connections columns in a 1994 [Benchmarks](#). -- Ed.

[Page One](#)

[Campus
Computing News](#)

[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)

[New Telecom
Service Request
Procedures](#)

[GroupWise E-Mail
Issues](#)

[Windows 98:
Personally I Like
it!](#)

[Statistical
Computing Tips:
S-Plus](#)

[The Network
Connection](#)

List of the Month

[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

List of the Month

Each month we highlight one Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list.

UNT Feral Cat Rescue Group

This month's list isn't exactly a list yet, but there is a good chance it will become one in the near future, and it is certainly close to home! According to their Web page, "The UNT Feral Cat Rescue Group is an organization dedicated to caring for the feral cat population on campus through a process of 'trap-treat-release,' with the ultimate goal of reducing the cat population through birth control and natural attrition." The group (and the cats) needs the support of the UNT community and friends. To get on the group mailing list, send mail to [Dallas Newell](#) with your request. Visit the UNT Feral Cat Rescue Group's Web site at <http://www.unt.edu/feralcat/> n

[Page One](#)[Campus
Computing News](#)[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)[New Telecom
Service Request
Procedures](#)[GroupWise E-Mail
Issues](#)[Windows 98:
Personally I Like
it!](#)[Statistical
Computing Tips:
S-Plus](#)[The Network
Connection](#)[List of the Month](#)[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)[Short Courses](#)[IRC News](#)[Staff Activities](#)[Shift Key](#)**WWW@UNT.EDU**

By [Mark Wilcox](#), Campus Web Administrator

Changes to the Central UNT Web Site

It's the end of summer and now is probably a good time for a quick update on things we have improved, released or changed on the UNT Web.

We haven't made any drastic changes to the central UNT Web site but the search engine that we use has been improved. For the past year or so we had used a product called Webinator made by a company called Thunderstone. Webinator served us well, but because our site has grown so vast so quickly, we need something with a bit more power.

Netscape Compass

Enter Netscape Compass. The Netscape Compass server is a search engine that can also become a "portal" server like Yahoo!. Inside of Compass are two parts, a Web-crawler search interface like a typical search engine and the ability to build a hierarchical index similar to Yahoo. Sharon Marek, one of our Web Developers has been working with the Compass server and now has it crawling the UNT site. She has also been working hard on building the indexes. We hope to have the indexes up sometime in the fall. Compass also gives us the ability to search not only HTML, but Word and PDF files too. You can try it out by going to <http://www.unt.edu/untsearch.html>

PAIS Improvements and Additions

The catalogs have also gone under a revision. The new 1998-99 catalogs are up for your perusal at <http://www.unt.edu/catalogs>. PAIS is working hard on improving the resources they provide in print to the Web. Look for the new ViewBook to pop up sometime in mid-fall. The ViewBook is in print now. It is a collection of photos and marketing materials that are designed to help increase our visibility to high school juniors and seniors.

In case you haven't noticed we also now have 2 video clips on our Web site now. One clip is a copy of the recruitment video and the other is a clip of Dr. Hurley talking about UNT. You can see these clips directly off the UNT homepage.

Web Courses

Finally we have also managed to bring up our Web Course Management server that uses the WebCT software package. More information about WebCT can be found at <http://courses.unt.edu/webct/>. The latest information about Distributed Learning over the Web can be found at <http://courses.unt.edu/>.

Until next time.

Mark

[Page One](#)

[Campus
Computing
News](#)

[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)

[New Telecom
Service
Request
Procedures](#)

[GroupWise E-
Mail Issues](#)

[Windows 98:
Personally I
Like it!](#)

[Statistical
Computing
Tips: S-Plus](#)

[The Network
Connection](#)

[List of the
Month](#)

[WW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

Short Courses

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks Editor*

The fall ACS short courses are still being planned and scheduled. The new course offerings will be announced before September 1. A series of courses aimed at people new to UNT -- especially incoming freshmen is coming up. "Introduction to Computing Services at UNT," as the courses are called, will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis August 25-September 4. Follow [this link](#) if you would like to find out more about ACS short courses and/or register for some.

The Computer Advantage courses, offered through the Human Resources Department, are back for the fall. Because these courses are offered in the Eagle Student Services Center (ESSC) Lab, UNT *students* can also attend the classes. The list of classes includes (Following [this link](#) to the Computer Advantage homepage may give you more information on these courses):

Course	Date/Day	Time	Location
Windows 95 Introduction	September 15, Tuesday	2-4pm	ESSC 152
Word 97 Introduction	September 23, Wednesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Word 97 Introduction	October 27, Tuesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Word 97 Introduction	December 2, Wednesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Excel 97 Introduction	October 13, Tuesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Excel 97 Introduction	November 4, Wednesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Excel 97 Introduction	December 8, Tuesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
PowerPoint 97 Introduction	October 6, Tuesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
PowerPoint 97 Introduction	November 10, Tuesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
PowerPoint 97 Introduction	December 16, Wednesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Advanced Word 97 - MailMerge	September 29, Tuesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
Advanced Word 97 - MailMerge	November 18, Wednesday	2-5pm	ESSC 152
UNT Home Page & Netscape	October 8, Thursday	2-4pm	ESSC 152
UNT Home Page & Netscape	November 24, Tuesday	2-4pm	ESSC 152

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses, geared to their class needs. Other groups can request special courses also. Contact ACS for more information (ISB 119, 565-4068, lynch@unt.edu).

Especially for Faculty and Staff Members

As mentioned above, staff and faculty members can also take courses through the [Human Resources](#) Department. A [Distributed Learning Curriculum](#) is also offered especially to faculty members throughout the year. Topics include Windows 95, PowerPoint, Basic Video Conferencing, Multimedia, and a series of classes concerning the World Wide Web.

Alternate Forms of Training

The [Training](#) Web site has all sorts of information about alternate forms of training. Training tapes, Computer Based Training (CBT) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered.

[Page One](#)

[Campus
Computing News](#)

[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)

[New Telecom
Service Request
Procedures](#)

[GroupWise E-Mail
Issues](#)

[Windows 98:
Personally I Like
it!](#)

[Statistical
Computing Tips:
S-Plus](#)

[The Network
Connection](#)

[List of the Month](#)

[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

IRC News



Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey,
Recording Secretary

IRC Regular Voting Members: Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Walter Bowen, Academic Administration; Bill Buntain, Communications Program Group; Carolyn Cunningham, Student Affairs; Paul Dworak, College of Music; Steve Grant, UNT Health Science Center; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, Administrative Program Group; Mike Kozak, Faculty Senate; Allen Livingston, Student Association; Steve Miller, Human Resources; Dennis Mueller, Research Program Group; Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Patrick Pluscht, Distributed Learning Team; Jim Poirot, College of Education; Don Schol, School of Visual Arts; Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Neal Tate, University Planning Council; Philip Turner, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for Distance Education and Dean of the School of Library and Information Resources (Chair, IRC); Virginia Wheless, Chancellor; John Windsor, College of Business. **IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members:** Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Richard Harris, Computing Center; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary); Rondel Stevens, Telecommunications.

No new IRC minutes were available at publication time. To see past IRC minutes, consult our [back issues](#).n

IRC Meeting Schedule

The [IRC](#) generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in the Administration Building Board Room. All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.n

[Page One](#)

[Campus
Computing News](#)

[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)

[New Telecom
Service Request
Procedures](#)

[GroupWise E-Mail
Issues](#)

[Windows 98:
Personally I Like
it!](#)

[Statistical
Computing Tips:
S-Plus](#)

[The Network
Connection](#)

[List of the Month](#)

[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

Staff Activities

Transitions

The following are new employees:

- **Jennifer Johnson** is the new Assistant Director for Computing Center Planning and Administration. She comes to us from the Bursar's Office, where she has been the University Bursar for the past nine years. In addition to her experience with budgeting, space planning, and personnel management, Jennifer brings to her new job disaster planning skills that she's gained while pursuing a degree in Emergency Management here at UNT.
- **John Gonzales**, has joined Administrative Computing as a programmer on the Year 2000 Project.
- **Leslie Bowden** has been selected as UNT's Telecommunications Manager. See ["Campus Computing News"](#) for more information about Ms. Bowden.

The following people are no longer working in the Computing Center:

- **Michael Puente**, Mainframe Operations Manager.
- **Jayma Compton**, part-time Clerical Assistant.

Awards

- **Bruce Pollock**, Computer Systems Manager in Network and Microcomputer Support, was recognized as a "Soaring Eagle" in the August, 1998 "Human Resources Newsletter."

[Page One](#)

[Campus
Computing News](#)

[Time to Renew
PRAS
Subscriptions](#)

[New Telecom
Service Request
Procedures](#)

[GroupWise E-Mail
Issues](#)

[Windows 98:
Personally I Like
it!](#)

[Statistical
Computing Tips:
S-Plus](#)

[The Network
Connection](#)

[List of the Month](#)

[WWW@UNT.EDU](#)

[Short Courses](#)

[IRC News](#)

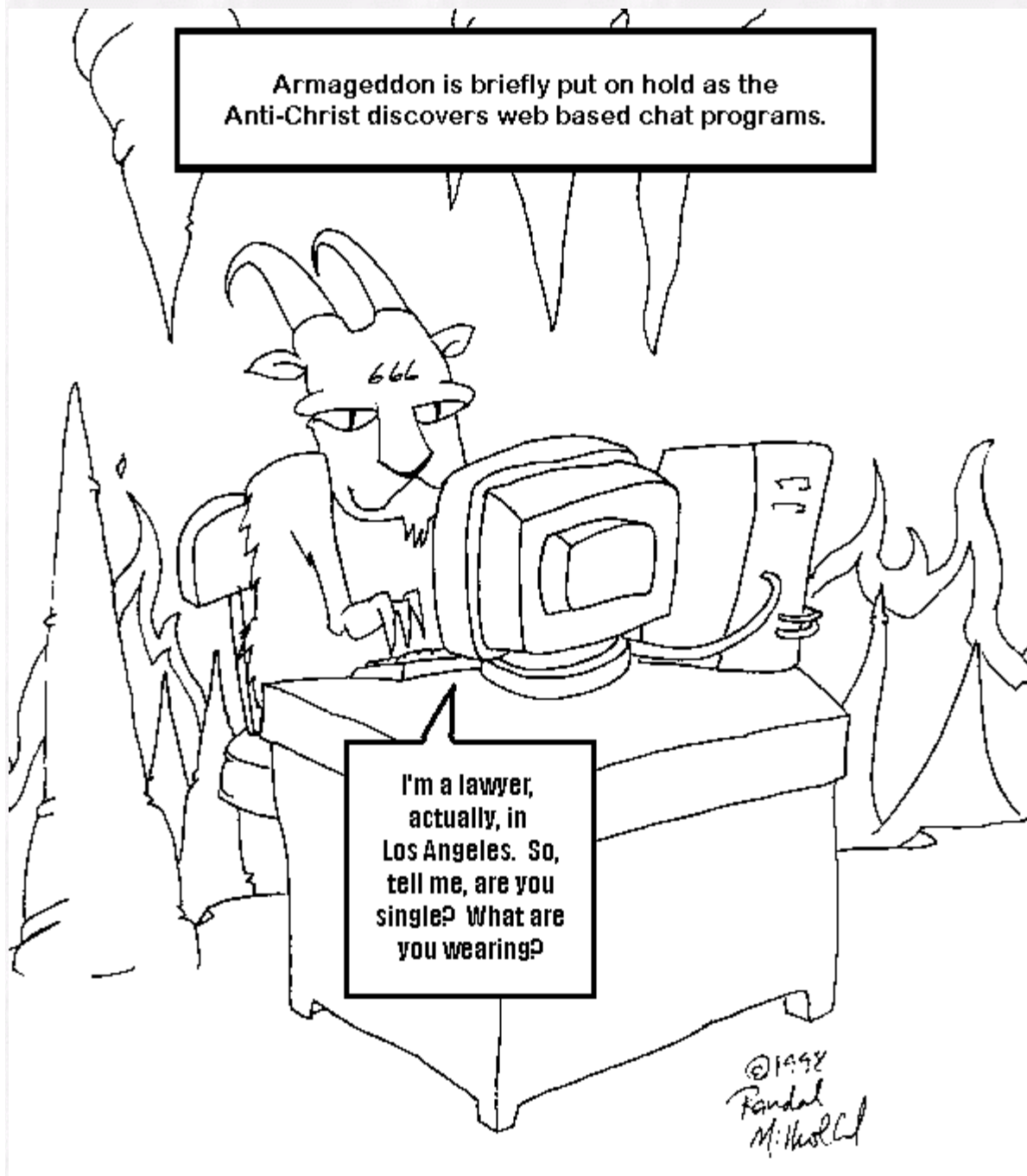
[Staff Activities](#)

[Shift Key](#)

Shift Key

By [Randal Milholland](#), Documentation Assistant

Armageddon is briefly put on hold as the Anti-Christ discovers web based chat programs.



Benchmarks Online

[Current Issue](#)

[1998](#)

[1999](#)

[2000](#)

[2001](#)

[2002](#)

[2003](#)

[2004](#)

[2005](#)

[2006](#)

[2007](#)

[2008](#)

[2009](#)

Benchmarks in Print

[Benchmarks
NewsJournal](#)

Back Issues

If you are looking for back issues of *Benchmarks*, consult the table to the left.

- **Subscribe to the *Benchmarks Online* Mailing List** -- If you would like to know when the latest issue is available and get a preview of it's contents, you can subscribe to the **Benchmarks Online** mailing list, unt-benchmarks. To subscribe to this list just send mail to listserv@unt.edu and in the body of the message put the command:

SUBscribe unt-benchmarks *your name*

For example: SUBscribe unt-benchmarks Jane Doe

To **Unsubscribe**:

1. Send the e-mail to listserv@unt.edu
2. In the body of the message type:

Signoff unt-benchmarks

3. Send.

- **Search *Benchmarks Online*** -- If you are looking for a specific topic you might want to search through the issues. Use the form below to search for documents containing specific words or combinations of words. The text search engine will display a weighted list of matching documents, with better matches shown first. Each list item is a link to a matching document; if the document has a title it will be shown, otherwise only the document's file name is displayed. For more information, see this brief [explanation](#) of the query language, along with examples.

Search for: